

117TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 2233

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Aretha Franklin in recognition of her contributions of outstanding artistic and historical significance to culture in the United States.

---

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 26, 2021

Mrs. LAWRENCE (for herself and Mr. COHEN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

---

## A BILL

To posthumously award a Congressional Gold Medal to Aretha Franklin in recognition of her contributions of outstanding artistic and historical significance to culture in the United States.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Aretha Franklin Con-  
5       gressional Gold Medal Act”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7       The Congress finds the following:

1                   (1) Aretha Franklin was born on March 25,  
2                   1942, in Memphis, Tennessee, and died peacefully at  
3                   her home in Detroit, Michigan, surrounded by family  
4                   and loved ones on August 16, 2018.

5                   (2) Aretha Franklin's musical talents have in-  
6                   fluenced generations of musicians and political lead-  
7                   ers, creating a legacy that spans an incredible 6 dec-  
8                   ades.

9                   (3) Aretha Franklin, dubbed the "Queen of  
10                  Soul", was the first woman ever inducted into the  
11                  Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, was a 2005 recipient  
12                  of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, and was a  
13                  1999 recipient of the National Medal of Arts and  
14                  Humanities Award, among other accolades.

15                  (4) Aretha Franklin's music served as a 1960s  
16                  call to action that inspired thousands to join civil  
17                  rights movements and still resonates across these  
18                  movements today.

19                  (5) Aretha Franklin's contributions go beyond  
20                  music and arts.

21                  (6) Aretha Franklin was also a philanthropist  
22                  who supported causes that advanced civil rights,  
23                  human health, and gender equality.

1                             (7) Aretha Franklin’s talents instilled hope, up-  
2                             lifted generations, and changed the lives of millions  
3                             of people across the globe.

4                             (8) The City of Detroit shaped Aretha’s life and  
5                             music, as her father and church introduced her to  
6                             local Motown artists.

7                             (9) In return, Aretha made countless contribu-  
8                             tions to the City of Detroit, and few people have  
9                             played a greater role in shaping the Nation’s cul-  
10                            turally and socially relevant discography than Aretha  
11                            Franklin.

12 **SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.**

13                             (a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of  
14                             the House of Representatives and the President pro tem-  
15                             pore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements  
16                             for the posthumous presentation, on behalf of Congress,  
17                             of a gold medal of appropriate design in commemoration  
18                             of Aretha Franklin, in recognition of her outstanding ar-  
19                             tistic and historical significance to the culture of the  
20                             United States.

21                             (b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the  
22                             presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary  
23                             of the Treasury (hereafter in this Act referred to as the  
24                             “Secretary”) shall strike a gold medal with suitable em-

1 blems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the  
2 Secretary.

3 (c) SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the  
5 gold medal referred to in subsection (a), the gold  
6 medal shall be given to the Smithsonian Institution,  
7 where it will be displayed as appropriate and made  
8 available for research.

9 (2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of  
10 Congress that the Smithsonian Institution should  
11 make the gold medal received under this Act avail-  
12 able for display elsewhere, particularly at other loca-  
13 tions and events associated with Aretha Franklin.

14 **SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.**

15 The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in  
16 bronze of the gold medal struck pursuant to section 3  
17 under such regulations as the Secretary may prescribe, at  
18 a price sufficient to cover the cost thereof, including labor,  
19 materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

20 **SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.**

21 (a) NATIONAL MEDALS.—The medals struck pursu-  
22 ant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter  
23 51 of title 31, United States Code.

1       (b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of section  
2 5134 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck  
3 under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

